

Women Organize to Fight the Budget

by Jane Hamilton

Women Against The Budget is an organization formed to fight against the new Social Credit budget as tabled on July 7, 1983. The first meeting of the Victoria group was held Tuesday, August 23 at the Union Hall, 2750 Quadra Street.

Four speakers representing four different areas of concern expressed their views on the new budget, then the floor was opened to suggestions from approximately 75 women.

Jan Brown from the B.C.G.E.U. spoke on workers' bargaining rights. She explained that Bill 26 nullifies the terms laid out in a collective agreement between employer and employee. Currently, the forms of the old agreement are followed until a new agreement can be reached, a procedure known as the duration rule. Brown explained that when a collective agreement expires, the Director of the Employment Standards Branch may institute the new Employment Standards Amendment Act in its place. The current Act sets a minimum standard for all employees, whereas the Amendment Act offers no such guarantees. Brown anticipates that this will encourage employers to take a hard line at the bargaining table.

As proposed, Bill 3 enables public sector employers to fire workers "without cause." Brown said that decreased job security and the lack of basic human rights would mean that women will be putting up with longer hours, lower wages, fewer benefits, and possibly, harassment in the workplace.

She said that it seemed apparent this government is intending to paralyze working women. "They don't know that women of today aren't willing to sit in the back of the bus. I'm not going to sit in the back of the bus," Brown said.

The next speaker, Maxine

Voag of the the B.C. Teachers' Federation, cited a number of statistics which showed how the new budget will effect women working in the education system. She said that the projected public school budget for 1986 is eight per cent less than the 1982 budget; with inflation, this is a 25 per cent cut.

Alternative programs will be the first cut. There will be fewer support services; Human Resources workers will be laid off and programs such as Indian Education and Family Life are endangered. Voag said, the English as a Second Language Program is slated to go by April 1984.

"It seems that in the opinion of this government, public education is a non-productive burden on the private sector." Voag said that women have borne the brunt of this attitude. Seventy per cent of teachers being laid off are women. In closing, Voag urged people to join the parents groups at their childrens' schools, vote in the November school board elections, talk to principals, and write letters.

Jocelyn Gifford, President of the B.C. Association of Social Workers told the group that the number of people on income assistance is up 44 per cent from March 1982 to March 1983, and that there has been no corresponding increase in staff. The Family Support Worker Program which helped families stay together by decreasing the number of children going to full-time foster care has been cut. Income assistance has been frozen, and the maximum in Shelter Aid has been reduced from \$133.71 to \$124.17. Health Care services, counselling and aid for seniors has been reduced; the Silver Threads' provincial grant was eliminated. Gifford reminded her audience that among senior citizens there are more women than men.

In addition, changes in the Tenancy Act, the elimination of



Organized groups of women demonstrated against the B.C. budget at the Vancouver rally on August 10.

the Rentalsman office, and the cut in the Community Involvement Program which gave \$50 each month to volunteer workers will all have detrimental effects on B.C. women. Equally destructive are the denial of grant money to planned parenthood Programs and the 30 per cent budget cut to the 17 birth control clinics in the province.

Joy Illington, lawyer and Ombudsperson at UVic, and Carol Milstone spoke on the effects of the new human rights legislation.

The only positive thing about it they said, was the inclusion of physical and mental handicaps, and marital status as being unfit grounds for discrimination. However, they added, the elimination of the human rights council and changes to other sections of the human rights act effectively erode the benefits these additions could have.

It will now be legal for employers to advertise explicitly

for men or women, and the kinds of questions asked in an interview will no longer be regulated.

The elimination of the "reasonable cause" section of the Code also means that only reasons specifically mentioned in the Code can be considered valid grounds for complaint. Decisions based on sexual preference, language, height and weight, and even pregnancy will not be considered discriminatory under the new Code.

Illington said a complainant will also have to prove intent to discriminate. It will no longer be possible to make a class action suit; the individual must make his or her own complaint through a private lawyer. If the case is lost the complainant could be ordered to pay the court costs and possibly compensation to the person against whom the complaint was made. This effectively denies legal access to many people.

Illington said there are three points at which the Minister of Human Rights may refuse the case: upon application, if he believes it is "frivolous or vexatious"; after investigation; or during final proceedings. According to Illington the Minister does not have to explain why he has refused a case, and there will be no course of appeal. Under the proposed legislation the commission's investigative powers are reduced and if an employer refuses to cooperate there will be no legal recourse.

After the speakers concluded the floor was opened to a number of possible courses of action. Among them were: the formation of a publicity committee, outreach centres, a letter writing campaign, increased media coverage, and liaison with other organizations.

Weekly meetings are being planned; for more information call 383-5545.



"You can't kill the spirit" was the chant of women activists at Greenham Common where a feminist commitment to peace was demonstrated.

Sisters: It's Our Turn

by shannon horsfield

In Greenham Common (British cruise missile site) the women gather. In non-violent action they camp, sing, block the gates, climb the fences, and dance on the silos. They are arrested. The charge: breach of the peace.

Their response, as declared by Katrina, member of the Greenham Peace Camp: "I will not be bound over to keep your peace: I am already keeping my peace. I will not take punishment, or recant, or admit guilt. I am responsible for this — for seeing the war machine grinding on, building silos, arming the arsenals of the world with death — and using all the non-violent

means I can to stop it. I am asking you to keep the peace. We are not on trial, you are."

Traditionally the military has been awarded responsibility for our sovereign protection. Now, however, this role is being questioned.

Women are asking questions, women such as Karen Silkwood, Randall Forsberg, Dr. Helen Caldicott. There are many more prominent women involved on an international level, but what is possibly more significant are those women, like the women at Greenham Peace Camp, who are deciding within their own communities, to protest and survive.

Once a ruling class is established, the traits of the hierarchy

manifest themselves in the laws, social attitudes, and moral fibre of the people it governs.

Any imbalance in the model is reflected in kind through all aspects of life within the society. This is evidenced in our own culture.

The social order which set down international law; the rules of diplomatic relations, our economic principles, and our philosophic standard are patriarchal in origin.

This system provides for a disproportionate amount of authority to be given to males.

As a result of this imbalance, we have a methodology and mythology which takes as its

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One Woman's Contribution

by susan fiddler

Gwen Brodsky, a Victoria lawyer, will teach the evening section of Women's Studies 200A (Women in Society: Past and Present) and 200B (Women in Society: Present and Future). We met for the first time one afternoon this summer, strangers, with only our gender and this article in common. After talking for an hour we parted, she to write answers to questions I had prepared in advance, I to wonder how to write out the interview. We still had our gender and this article in common... The italics are mine; the words are those of Gwen Brodsky.

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A. Law is basically a mirror of society — that is, a WASP, male society, heavily focussed on protecting property interests. However, some laws, such as those for family court and consumer rights, are geared to help underdogs. Law is the language of power, used by our country's leaders and power structures. My sole intention in applying to law school was to find out what was going on behind those hard-to-open doors.

...As the dogwork part of my brain struggled to absorb the secret pass words that open all of the doors, the creative part of my brain nourished a blossoming political/feminist consciousness ... I decided to devote at least one career of my lifetime to improving the status of women.

Q. How is society treating women today?

A. Women do not make up the mainstream of society. The mainstream [sic] is made of men; women, like the poor, the handicapped, the aged, have things done to them. In my opinion, women are an endangered gender. The world hates its women, but until now has always needed us to produce the next generation. As soon as technology has perfected the artificial uterus, women will not even have an essential role in mothering, except to produce eggs, which can already be extracted and stored.

Q. What do you think of the scientific experiment which recently produced an egg able to divide into cells without benefit of sperm? How will that effect the future of women, if men are no longer needed to propagate the species?

A. We need feminists to help develop a code of ethics to define the parameters of life, or else the decisions concerning criterion for selection made ad hoc by the men could be quite sexist.

Q. Do you mean that men would choose to reproduce only gorgeous air-heads without any intelligence?

A. Why wouldn't they? Many men feel threatened by strong women.

Continued on page 3

The Women's Centre

The Centre

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The Women's Centre continues to be a source of support for individuals on a drop-in basis. The Collective's first meeting will be held on September 15 at 12:30 in the Women's Centre. New women are encouraged to participate.



The Women's Centre, Room 106, SUB, 721-8353; 9am to 3pm, Monday to Friday.

The Library

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We invite other women of UVic to participate in The Emily during the 1983-84 school year. Drop by the Women's Centre, Room No. 106 in the Student Union Building for more information.

Gynergetics: Feminist Peer Counselling

Gynergy: women's energy. It is a strong energy and one with unlimited potential. Gynergetics is a feminist peer counselling program developed by women at UVic to acknowledge and foster that energy and to celebrate it.



The program focuses on personal growth through experiential learning. Women think and talk about what they want and articulate individual goals. The process of combining goal-setting with peer counselling

perpetuates self awareness.

Ultimately, peer counselling is listening: deeply, openly and without preconceived ideas, solutions or conclusions. Such listening is an affirmation of the validity of each woman's experience. The purpose of peer counselling is not only to solve problems but to expand possibilities, generate alternatives and create support networks.

As sociologist Alice Rossi expressed: "The most important thing one woman can do for another is to illuminate and expand her sense of actual possibilities."

This fall, Brenda Percy and Olive Mann are offering a six week evening course in Gynergetics through University Extension. Women may contact University Extension or the Women's Centre at 721-8353 for further details, and are required to register at University Extension prior to the introductory meeting scheduled for Wednesday, September 14, 7:30 p.m., Cornett A317.

Wendo: Self-Defense for Women



Wen-do develops physical techniques to maximize women's strengths and to minimize their weaknesses, providing basic methods for defense against the most common types of attacks that women encounter. An attack usually involves violent persons acting against non-violent persons and large ones against small ones; not necessarily males assaulting females. Each attack is different — Wen-do teaches women to act as soon as they realize they are being attacked. Discussions on awareness and avoidance and verbal self defense are all included in the basic Wen-do program — a two day workshop consisting of 12 to 15 hours of instruction.

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"By every inch we grow in intellectual height our love strikes down its roots deeper, and spreads out its arms wider."

Olive Schreiner (1855 — 1920)
The Story of an African Farm

women who worked on this issue:
lesley bullard, kathy chan, cheryl coull, megan davies, susan fiddler, sally gosc, barb grantham, jane hamilton, robin higgins, shannon horsfield, cheryl howigan, olive mann, brenda percy, nora ready, sadie whitmoon, moira coady.

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A. What are you doing, playing "Devil's Advocate"?

Q. Well, if feminists were the only geneticists to make those decisions, what kind of people would they choose to reproduce?

A. Hmmm. That's a good question!

...Feminists by definition are changers, non-conforming — there are no bounds on our imagination and hopes. Women, as an entity, are able to fulfill all our own needs. Men will have to feel afraid, threatened, before they move ahead. Once they see that we don't need them, they will start moving.

Q. Why is there a need for a Women's Studies course? Doesn't that just bring about a further segregation of the sexes? Why not a Men's Studies, or Humanist Studies?

A. Despite the academic pretence of neutrality, objectivity and balance, it is an inescapable fact that university courses are created and taught by men, about men, for men. Women students have a choice of either distancing themselves from the masculine in their courses, or identifying with the masculine. Their life experience as women has no relevance in academia.

Q. I have a male friend who is interested in taking a Women's Studies course. He is interested in the changes going on around him, and wants to learn more about the way in which women are changing — what they think, how they would like to see men change, etc. How do you feel about men enrolling in Women's Studies?

A. We haven't got time to hold men's hands and lead them along! We haven't got time to mother them! Women have a long way to go, and our problems are far too urgent for us to mother these men along.

...a man in a Women's Studies course should be low key so as not to duplicate the old, destructive patterns of domination and competition. Women among women only will be more likely to talk about their experience as women, and validate one another as women.

Q. How do you view the future?

A. The outlook for the future is dim. I am pessimistic about world peace, environmental and human rights issues. These require our urgent attention, or all may be lost. We are involved in crisis management, and have no time for crystal ball gazing.

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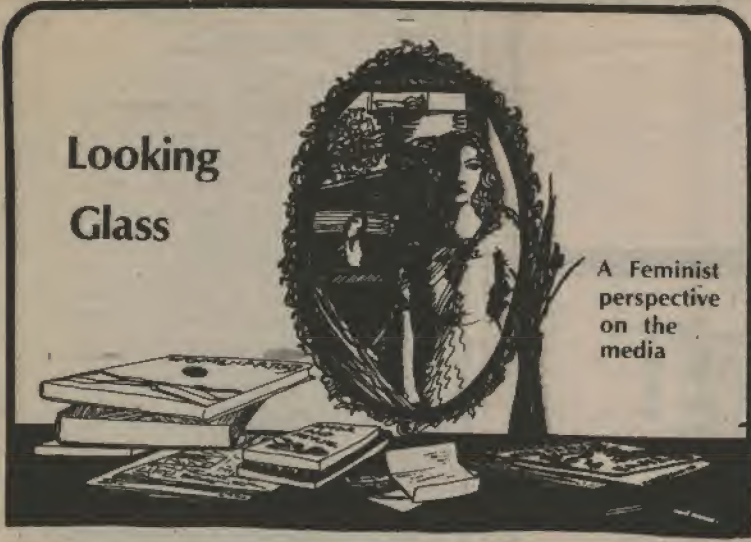
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Looking Glass



A Feminist perspective on the media

by S. Whitemoon and Brenda Percy

MISTS OF AVALON

Marion Zimmer Bradley, Knoff, 1983

Marion Zimmer Bradley has been writing for a long time, having authored at least nine earlier novels. She has developed a fluent language and a sense of myth and archetype which is conveyed masterfully in this retelling of the Arthurian legends.

For the first time we hear the story spoken in the feminine through the voice of Morgaine, much-maligned in earlier versions. In this story she is redeemed, as she confronts herself in each stage of her development as a woman, and a priestess. Hers is a hero's quest; a search for herself that leads her through the labyrinth... "the womb, the wrapper of our mystical center. When we find our way to the center, we make a complete turn and go out the way we came in. In so doing, we have experience of ourselves." (Lanning/Hart, "Ripening", pg. 123). Nonetheless, she is a very human and believable character. It is easy to identify with her consciousness of human frailty in the face of spiritual and social upheaval.

Mists of Avalon is written within the context of the transitions from the 'non-proselytizing nature-religion' of the Goddess, to the urban, authoritarian laws of Roman Christianity. As embracing Christian thought becomes more and more politically expedient, the spirit and power of Avalon and the old Druidic ways recede further into the Mists; the community of priestesses on the Island becomes more detached from the world.

This is a powerful mythic memory — there is something deeply familiar about the struggle to preserve the intimate knowing of the ways of the Goddess from the limitations of the Patriarchal world-view.

There is, something familiar about the lives of all the women in the book, their relationships to men, and to each other. As women, we can recognize and understand them — as archetypes they are applicable to our lives today.

This is a book with amazing scope and complexity, encompassing issues of sexuality, morality, and power in a vast tapestry of human interaction. A book not to be missed.

Part II

Ripening: An almanac of Lesbian Lore and Vision by Lee Lanning and Vernetta Hart
1981, Word Weavers Minneapolis, Minn.

"We are speaking the unspeakable. We speak of our reality, of the experience of our bodies and minds. Our speech is made possible by our hearing — we are hearing each other. In the

speaking and the hearing we are re-interpreting knowledge. We speak secrets and in so doing, we become more honest with ourselves and each other." *Ripening*, p.114

Ripening is a beautiful crystal clear collection of graphics and gems of 'speaking in the feminine.' It is affirmative and informative and invites us to re-vision the experience of womanhood.

We welcome your comments, criticism and contributions to *The Looking Glass* — contact Brenda and Sadie through the Centre.

Next Emily: Oct. 6

All copy and advertising needed by Sept. 21

The Victoria Women's Network invites all interested women to our first meeting of the season, Strathcona Hotel 919 Douglas St., 7:30 p.m., September 22
Wine and cheese
Please call Susan Sowden 383-1023 for information

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Sisters

premise the superiority of the male persona.

No doubt this personae too has been exaggerated. Within the context of that exaggeration we find a society which regards aggression as the prime motivator of our species. Consequently we have a system which exploits rather than nurtures, and in its extreme, believes that a show of force is the only way to ensure peace.

While this precept may have been functional in the past, although it meant that force was used at great cost, we can no longer rely upon it to ensure our survival. In fact, this precept fundamentally threatens our survival. Johnathan Schell, in his book, *The Fate of the Earth* says: "Up to now, every risk has been contained within the frame of life; extinction would shatter the frame. It represents not the defeat of some purpose but an abyss in which all human purpose would be drowned for all time. We have no right to place the possibility of this limitless, eternal defeat on the same footing as risks that we run in the ordinary conduct of our affairs in our particular transient moment of human history."

Ninety-two percent of the world's population is neither Russian nor American. That majority is held in constant jeopardy because the super powers are caught in a pattern of reciprocal arms build-up. Understanding the complexities of this situation takes time. As a beginning however there are a few terms we should all be familiar with: *Unilateral disarmament* — is one sided dismantling of weapons arsenals.

Multi-lateral disarmament — is when nations agree upon arms reduction within a specific time period.

Nuclear arms freeze — describes a moratorium on arms development. Deployment is established. *First strike capability* — is a frequently used term which still exists only in theory. It describes the ability to exact an attack on the enemy before retaliatory measures can be taken. *Verifiability* — where the number and position of weapons can be established.

In the present state of affairs our major concern is verifiability. Any hope for arms reduction is based on this concept. This is the immediate problem with the cruise missile, and why the populations of so many NATO countries are pro NATO but "anti cruise". Adopting the cruise missile guarantees an equally dangerous response from the Soviet Union. Using the cruise as a bargaining tool means "upping the ante" in a game in which we have already bet the mortgage. With these stakes we simply can't afford to play.

"Nuclear Weapons, particularly provocative first strike weapons like the cruise, are the logical conclusion of a life denying culture that values aggressive domination above the power of empathy, sensitivity and compassion. We are trying to re-establish those values. They are vital to our survival," says Rebecca, of Greenham Peace Camp.

Sisters, it is our turn.

When you decide to act, contact the Greater Victoria Disarmament Group, 4-2420 Douglas Street, Victoria. Phone: 384-2445.

Calynder

Friday, Saturday, September 9-10

Discovering the Goddess Within

—a workshop exploring the dynamics of the feminine, as a means of becoming truly authentic individuals.

—fee: \$20.00

—place: Saltspring Island

—time: 7-10pm Friday, 9:30 — 4:30 Saturday

Pre-registration only; contact 537-2662

Wednesday, September 21

Business and Professional Women's Dinner Meeting

—speaker: Dr. Pound

—fee: \$7.50

—place: Imperial Inn, Victoria, 6:30 p.m.

—call Jackie James, 721-5897 or 386-2164 for information

Thursday, September 22

Women's Network — Wine and Cheese

—newcomers welcome to celebration and change of executive

—fee: \$6.00

—place: Mahogany Room, Strathcona Hotel, Victoria.

—starts: 7:30 p.m.

—call Susan Sowden, 383-1023, for more information.

Thursday, Friday, September 22-23

British Columbia Worklife Forum: "Bridging the Gaps"

—workshops and discussion panels

—fee: \$175.00

—place: Inn at Denman Place, Vancouver

—call Sue Burton, 224-9371, for more information.

Friday, Saturday, September 30-31

Workshop on Southern Africa

—speakers: Thomas Berger, Yusuf Salooji

—call Victoria International Development Education Association, 385-2333, for more information.

Saturday, October 1

National Day of Action for Freedom of Choice on Abortion

—call Status of Women Action Group, 381-1012, for more information.

Thursday, October 6

Creative Energy Playshop

—encourages the release of creative energy through mime, clowning, sound poetry and performance art

—fee: \$10.00

—place: Eastwest lounge, SUB, U.Vic.

—time: 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

—call U.Vic Women's Centre Collective, 721-8353, for more information.

Also of note:

every wednesday evening

At Last! Coffee House

—live music, dancing, coffee, herbal teas

—always looking for new talent

—place: 1923 Fernwood St., Victoria.

wednesdays, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Drop-in for survivors of sexual assault

—place: Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre, 1045 Linden Ave., Victoria.

—also recruiting and training for crisis line and office volunteers, early October

—call 383-5545 for more information

This fall

The Focus is Women

—courses offered by U.Vic's University Extension: career and self exploration gynergetics, financial management, women and work, critical social issues and more

—call University Extension, 721-8451

Women Against Pornography is putting together a project on EROTICA for next spring. We would appreciate any suggestions or submissions of material from women. Please send to: WAP, Box 2363 Sydney, B.C.

UVic Women's Rugby Club will again be active for their second year on campus. All interested persons are welcome to help us in any capacity, i.e. players, coaches etc... No experience necessary. Please contact Mary at 477-8124.